

FIREFIGHTER

Firefighter October 2007

Gotcha! RFU 'bottle it' at NJC

Who really represents the Retained Firefighter?

It has been confirmed that the RFU has refused a seat on the NJC, it is appropriate that the FBU poses the question, 'what is the RFU for?'

For many years representatives of this organisation, who claim to work in the best interests of RDS Firefighters, have postured and posed on the sidelines of the Fire Service. In a vainglorious attempt to qualify for the heavy-weight class at NJC level, they have puffed themselves up to full working height but have been found badly wanting at the weigh-in.

RFU officials have repeatedly made commitments to RDS Firefighters that their organisation would actively seek a seat at NJC and use it to work for RDS Firefighters at the reformed NJC. To that supposed end and in an undignified attempt to present themselves as relevant, they courted the favours of the Chief Fire Officers Association.

Sadly, for the RDS Firefighters who were duped by the empty rhetoric of Mr Chadbon and others, RFU Officials have now declared

that the organisation will not play any role at NJC and will instead focus on its organisation at local level.

Betrayal is an ugly spectacle. The leadership of the FBU will take no satisfaction in telling RFU members that they have been misled by the leadership of the RFU promising to work for a seat on the NJC and then refusing it when offered. It is obvious that the trust of many RDS Firefighters has been abused by Chadbon and others, who promised a great deal and delivered very little!

It is now time for those RDS Firefighters to decide who truly represents the interests of RDS Firefighters!

The FBU has embarked on a National recruitment campaign and we will welcome into our membership those RDS Firefighters who recognise the fact that the RFU has sold them short.

If RDS Firefighters want a Union that will be honest with them...

If they want a Union that works for them....

If they want their representatives to be elected by them...

They will join the FBU!

The FBU will now correspond with all Fire and Rescue Services in which the RFU claim to have achieved rights of recognition and request that those Services mirror the National position and conduct their business with the only organisation that is capable of and committed to representing RDS Firefighters....the FBU!

The RFU has had its five minutes of fame. Its irrelevancy is surpassed only by the inadequacy of its leadership.

The FBU will direct the spotlight on the shortcomings of the RFU at every level and we will challenge their competency, authority and ability to represent any person, place or thing associated with the Fire and Rescue Service.

We will challenge Fire and Rescue Services to confirm whether they have chosen to deal with a body representative of their workers or an organisation which openly admits it does not seek to represent RDS employees at national level.

We will name and shame those Fire and Rescue Services who have nurtured this shame faced organisation and used it to hide from those who will honestly and

faithfully represent and advance the interests of RDS Firefighters.

Discussions on pay for RDS Firefighters are imminent at NJC level and the RFU has taken a **conscious and deliberate decision to play NO PART** in influencing the outcome of those discussions. By doing so its Officials have abrogated their responsibilities and betrayed the many promises made to their members.

In stark contrast, the FBU will meet its responsibilities head on. We will be organised, willing and prepared to fight for the best pay structure for RDS Firefighters across the UK and Northern Ireland and we are confident that RDS Firefighters

will recognise this and give their support to those who will support them.

For information on FBU membership visit www.fbu.org.uk or contact a Branch/Brigade Official.



Paul Woolstenholmes National Officer - RDS members

"FBU action to capitalise on the RFU's u-turn taken needs to be swift and hit home while FRAs and the Employers are still figuring out how they justify their 'tame union's' action. This could be initiated with a standard letter to all FAs and CFOs asking them to take heed of the RFU who asked them to mirror the national position, which does not include them by their own choice, and stop any local recognition.



We must highlight what these people actually bring to the table (nothing of value) and get them off other national forums. We must challenge how they are structured locally and challenge their claim that they have annually elected officials within Brigades.

They have embarrassed themselves, they have embarrassed government, they have embarrassed their members. They have been hoisted by their own petard.

By conference next year we should have seen a substantial rise in FBU membership as we continue to visit every region."